

**WE CLAIM**

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1. In a point of sale system for acquiring bar code data relating to a transaction, wherein a first bar code scanner is arranged to scan bar codes and provide data relating to scanned bar codes to a processor, the improvement comprising a second portable bar code scanner, said second scanner including a radio module for acting as a slave unit using a master-slave data communication protocol and said second scanner including an identifying bar code, and wherein there is provided a master radio module associated with said point of sale system and wherein said master radio module is arranged to act as a master for communication with said slave radio module in response to reading of said identifying bar code.

2. The improvement specified in claim 1 wherein said identifying bar code is representative of a data communication address for said slave radio.

3. The improvement specified in claim 1 wherein said processor includes a memory having a data communication address for said slave radio associated with data representing said identifying bar code.

4. The improvement specified in claim 1 wherein said master radio module is arranged to discontinue acting as a master for communication with said slave radio module in response to a further reading of said identifying bar code.

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5. A method for establishing a master/slave data communication link, comprising:  
providing a machine readable identification device on a slave unit;  
reading said identification device with a reader associated with said master unit to obtain

identification data;

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determining a slave address of said slave unit from said identification data; and

operating said master unit to associate with said slave unit.

6. A method for reading bar codes on items to be purchased, comprising:

providing a portable bar code reader having a slave radio module having a slave address for providing data communication and an identifying bar code on said reader;

reading said identifying bar code with a second bar code reader associated with a master radio module and a data processor to obtain identifying data;

determining said slave address using said identifying data;

operating said master unit to associate with said slave unit; and

using selectively said portable bar code reader and said second bar code reader to read bar codes and provide data to said processor.

7. A portable bar code scanner comprising a housing enclosing a slave radio data transceiver having a network address and an optical bar code reader and a bar code on the exterior of said housing, said bar code being associated with said network address.

8. A terminal having a processor, a bar code reader, a master radio module for providing data communications and a program for operating said processor, said program being arranged to operate said bar code reader and provide data to said processor, operate said

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processor to recognize said data as data identifying a slave unit and operate said master radio  
module to conduct data communications with said slave unit.

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